



July 1, 2008

The Honorable Mary L. Landrieu  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510-1804

Dear Senator Landrieu:

Thank you for your letter to Postmaster General John E. Potter regarding the U.S. Postal Service's receipt of goods from a recent offering of surplus items by the General Services Administration (GSA) in Ft. Worth, TX.

Only after the Postal Service accepted these goods was it revealed, as you point out in your correspondence, that the items were purchased by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as "starter kits" for families impacted by Hurricane Katrina.

The Postal Service, as you know, is proud of its service to the states affected by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005. As soon as Sept. 2, 2005, we were able to distribute Social Security checks to customers throughout Louisiana via temporary delivery sites. We established an emergency hotline for the approximately 9,500 Postal employees in Louisiana, so that we could be sure they were safe. After the storm, we moved to quickly place impacted Postal employees in alternate locations, allowing them to continue working and providing for their families.

The first week alone, the Postal Service processed around 87,000 Changes of Address (COA) for customers affected by the storm. By Sept. 10, we had reestablished delivery in 75% of the areas we serve in Louisiana and the Gulf Coast. We are also proud of the fact that, in 2006, approximately 12,000 absentee ballots from displaced Louisiana residents were delivered and counted in the Mayoral election for the City of New Orleans. Finally, in 2006, the Louisiana legislature declared June 2 "United States Postal Service Day" throughout the state to celebrate and recognize the incredible efforts by our employees following this unbelievable disaster.

As recently as March and June of this year, the Postal Service announced the reopening of Postal facilities in the Gentilly, Lakeview, and Chef Menteur areas of New Orleans. We continue to provide the community, elected officials, and other interested parties with information on our continuing efforts to fully restore services to the people of Louisiana.

It is plain to see that the Postal Service cares about the citizens of Louisiana and would never intentionally enter into any activity that would adversely affect them; especially those still suffering the effects of Hurricane Katrina.

Page 2

In Feb. 2008, an invitation was proffered by GSA for an event to dispose of surplus items from a warehouse in Ft. Worth, TX. The information we received indicated that GSA was inviting state and federal agencies to identify and receive excess items that could be utilized by those agencies. The only cost would be transportation of the goods. On Feb. 13, a representative from the Ft. Worth Postal District attended the event and received a certain amount of goods, valued at approximately \$6,000.00. The inventory of these goods and their corresponding value includes:

- two cases of brooms, \$222
- one case of broom handles, \$44
- one pallet of stretcher sheets, \$2,085
- one case of buckets, \$14
- 35 cases of one-gallon jugs, \$3,144

The Postal Service was at no time aware that these goods were anything other than surplus items, which is how they were identified by GSA.

The items are still in a Postal Service warehouse in Grand Prairie, TX and we are currently coordinating with your staff and the Louisiana Recovery Authority for the return of needed items to Louisiana. If I can assist further in this or any other Postal matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine V. Pagano". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Catherine V. Pagano  
Manager, Government Relations